The Wrong Signal

By Dr. Suhento Liauw

Translated by Mrs. Krista Ang

The Fall of Man

Since the first man committed sin, men can no longer live with the Most Holy God in the most holy heaven. In their heart, there was once an evil desire to be equal with God. They doubted God and trusted Satan instead. This evil deed must be punished before it can be deemed settled. The Most Just God will not acquit any sin without punishment and God has said that the punishment of sin is death.

But because God so loved the world, He planned to send a savior who would bear the punishment meant for sin. Adam and Eve had to confess their sins and repent, and believe in the God's promise for a savior who would atone for their sins. They once distrusted God. So if they wanted their sins to be atoned by the Savior, they had to believe in that promise. As a sign of their belief, they had to perform a symbolic worship that represented the punishment that would be borne by the Savior by sacrificing a lamb on an altar while confessing their sins at the same time. This worship would always remind them of the God's promise.

Fathers as the First Signalers

A father had to teach the truth of this simple symbolic worship to his children. Thus this practice of symbolic worship was passed on from generation to generation so that they would always remember God's promise. Fathers had to teach their children that they have to confess and repent from their sins and believe in God's promise of a savior who would atone for their sins.

If a father taught the wrong concept, it was the same as giving the wrong signal to his children so that they went astray. At that time, fathers are the pillar and ground of the truth for their children. Spiritually, these children walked guided by the signal given by their fathers. If the signal given was the wrong one, those children would be misled. One example is Nimrod who might have experienced receiving the wrong signal from his grandfather, Ham.

Israelites as the Signaler for All Nations

After the human race was scattered to all directions of the earth, God built a nation as an accurate signaler to all other nations that God would fulfill His promise of a Savior. Each man who wanted their sins to be atoned had to repent and believe in that promised Savior, that He would replace him in the punishment of his sins.

All symbolic worships centered on the Holy Tabernacle and then around the Holy Temple built by Solomon were reminders of God's promise to send The Savior. He would take away the sin of the world (John 1:29), and every man who believes Him will be counted as justified since the Lamb of God has atoned him. This truth is the signal that must be broadcasted by the Israelites to all nations on earth.

If the Israelites did not perform their duty well, then all other nations would perish because they did not receive the right signal. That was why God was so angry when the Israelites were not faithful to

their role. All the worship rituals complete with the priesthood of Aaron were the symbols of the truth to come (Hebrew 10:1-3). That was also why God was so angry with Saul who did not obey the (doctrinal) rules that only a priest could offer a burnt offering. David's sin was related with morality, while Saul's sin was related with the salvation doctrine.

Moral sin is also a sin, but the sin of the whole world has been taken away by Jesus Christ. Sinful man only morally needs to confess his sin and repent. But, doctrinal sin will lead to peril since it will distort the faith and mislead many people who hear it since they will misunderstand the salvation program that God has planned since the beginning. Thus, God was angry with Saul and God hated every king that caused the Israelites to turn away from Him. Israelites were appointed as the signaler to all other nations and when they broadcast the wrong signal, all other nations would perish.

The Local Church as the Signaler in the New Testament Age

The duty of the Israelites as signaler to all other nations was finished when John appeared to announce the coming of the Messiah (Luke 16:18, Matthew 11:13). The age of symbolic worship that served as a reminder to all people about God's promise of a Savior ended when the promised One came. "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him" (John 4:23).

Now God is building His church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18) and commanding them to spread to all the earth (Acts 1:8). God uses the local church to tell about the coming of the Messiah to all man, even to all creatures (Mark 16:15-16) in hyperbole. Every believer must be educated to be a disciple by first being baptized as a symbol of the Gospel that has saved them (Matthew 29:19-20, Rome 6:3-4). After that, they form flocks of sheep that must be lovingly shepherded for God (John 12:15-17). These flocks of sheep are also called the New Testament church, the pillar and ground of the truth (I Timothy 3:15). These churches are assigned to give the right signal to the world about the salvation of soul for each man. They must preach the Gospel accurately so each man who hears and believes it can have the certainty of entering the Kingdom of Heaven. There must be no mistake, not even a small one, because one small mistake can develop into a huge one. Furthermore, a wrong Gospel will not save its listeners anymore.

How important is the position of local church in this New Testament Age. It has the same position as fathers from the age of Adam until the Torah was written, and as the Jews since Torah was written until John appeared to public. The age of fathers as priests and pillars of the truth was the age of family-altar, but not now. The "Abba-Love" group who wants to preserve fathers' position as priests was born too late. If they want to maintain fathers' position as priests, they should have been born in the age of Abraham. Even since Aaron was anointed as priest, the priesthood of father was no longer valid. That's why since the anointing of Aaron, fathers no longer blessed their children as Jacob did (Genesis 49). Of course a father can and even must **pray** to God to bless his children.

Satan's Disturbance of the Signal

As he has done to fathers from the age of Adam until the age of Moses, and to the Israelites since they were at the Mount of Sinai until the appearance of John the Baptist, Satan has never let God's churches to perform their duty in broadcasting the accurate signal to the world.

If only all fathers since the age of Adam continued to stand on the truth that God ordained them to do and kept performing the simple symbolic worship while confessing their sins to the promised Savior who would come, then the global deluge in Noah's time would not have happened. But Cain intentionally disobeyed this doctrine by sacrificing the fruit of the ground rather than an animal that

could shed blood. God already appointed animals (lambs) as symbol of the promised Messiah. However, Cain tried to replace them with other things (crops).

After being rebuked, instead of repenting, Cain killed his brother. Since then, Cain's descendants destroyed the earth with their rebellion and by producing a generation who were evil in the eyes of God. Fortunately, Noah was still faithful and kept doing the symbolic worship that God had ordained. Even when his ark landed at the Mount of Ararat, the first thing that Noah did was to build an altar and sacrificed clean animals (lambs). But the grandson of Ham whose name was Nimrod ruled over the earth and led men to disobey their Creator. As consequence, God scattered their languages so men had to scatter to all the earth in groups based on the language spoken.

After that, God chose a nation as a broadcaster of the right signal to all other nations. But Satan did not sit still. Even on the day of its establishment as a nation, when Moses and Joshua went to Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments which would be the law for the nation, Satan used this opportunity by causing the Israelites to sin fatally by worshipping a golden calf.

When God chose a location, that was the Middle East which was very strategic to broadcast signals to Europe, Africa, and Asia, Satan tried to prevent it by making the Israelites doubt that they could conquer Canaan even with the help of God and so causing them to wander in the desert for 40 more years. In the end, they entered Canaan and performed their duty as broadcasters of God's signal. The symbolic worship which was centered round the Holy Tabernacle actually served as reminder of God's promise of a Savior to atone sins. All men who believed in this promise at this time had to repent and look forward to the coming of the promised Savior while performing the symbolic worship that represented Him.

The rule of Solomon was the peak of the Israelites' success in broadcasting the truth and the majesty of Jehovah to all the earth. The queen of Sheba who lived far away in the south received the signal and came to Jerusalem. Besides admiring Solomon, the queen must have admired the symbolic worship and the teachings of the prophets.

The King Jeroboam who should have been faithful to God because he had inherited most of the Kingdom of David led 10 tribes to worship idols. The rule of King Manasseh was a period of darkest rebellion against God. Israelites who should have broadcasted an accurate signal about Jehovah, the Creator of heaven and earth, and His promise of a Savior, broadcasted a perverted one instead.

If only the Israelites were successful in broadcasting the truth, then Siddhartha Gautama would have been enlightened (Buddha) by visiting Jerusalem just like the queen of Sheba did. Kong Fu Tse would have heard about Torah, the first most comprehensive law on earth. Furthermore, the Greek philosophers would not have questioned the meaning and origin of life.

Unfortunately, the Israelites failed many times to broadcast the truth so many nations lost their way. Only a few people, who were really keen to seek the truth despite the blurred signal, could see the right path by a very careful observation. Among these were the eunuch from Ethiopia and Cornelius, a Roman commander.

Satan's Disturbance of Church's Signal

If Satan did not let fathers perform their function well as the pillar and ground of the truth, and also messed up Israel when that nation served as pillar of the truth, do you think he will sit still and let the local church perform their function well (I Timothy 3:15)? Impossible!

The first thing that Satan will do in disturbing the local church is to mess up their understanding between doctrines and daily life. Satan will try its best to control the teachers in the church so that they will pay more attention to the subject of love than to doctrines. It is true that Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one

another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John 13:34-35). However, we must not forget that God also said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32) Furthermore, the Great Commandment stated, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:20).

There is not one Christian denomination who dares to disregard love because it is an explicit command stated in the bible. However, many Christians apply it wrongly, such as what is taught by *The Children of God*. Church denominations apply it wrongly if they put more emphasize on love outside the right doctrine, of if they disregard doctrines in order to apply this love principle. Love without the true biblical doctrines is no longer Christian love but Buddhism. Even the Buddhists are exposing love and charity publicly by establishing a TV Station named DAAI (great love).

When Christians are confused between charity and biblical salvation doctrine, Satan succeeds. Christians and Christian organizations that collect fund to help the poor people in the third world countries (Islamic countries) are doing good things. But, if they relent to local government pressures to give monetary aids without giving the gospel, Satan will be happy. He whispered, "Just receive the aid, and don't trust in their God. Take the food offered to you but close your ears to the Gospel." This is what happened in Africa, Aceh, and almost everywhere.

The right love, a biblical one, meets the most important need along with other needs. The most important need is salvation of soul, the opportunity to be reconciled to God. Biblical doctrine is a love package that can't be disassembled. It is even the main composition in the whole package of Christian love.

In the course of history, churches have gone astray many times. In Galatia there was an "Advent" church which mixed up Christianity with Judaism even when the apostles were still living. Satan through the Emperor Constantine succeeded in mixing Christianity with paganism by introducing the concept of worship to the sun and Grecian gods into Christianity. The result was the Roman Catholic Church with its doctrine of the Universal Church, which has been broadcasting the mixed up signals for more than a thousand years. Augustine, the founder of the universal Catholic Church taught that babies had to be baptized in order to cleanse them from their original sin. He created the Holy Communion that served as the way to obtain salvation. This is a very wrong doctrine which was later adopted by John Calvin. Both Augustine and Calvin broadcasted the wrong signal.

The Nestorian Christians who flourished in the Arabian regions have also broadcasted a wrong signal, otherwise Mohammed would have believed in the Triune God. And if they understood that the revelation process ended at Revelation 22:21, Mohammed's family would have also understood that there would never be any additional revelation given in the 6th Century AD, and that the Bible was the only Word of God. The mistake of the Nestorians in believing that God is only in one Person and not three is now renewed and promoted by the *Jehovah Witness*, while their other mistake in believing that the revelation process is still ongoing is now being developed by the *Charismatic movement*.

Now, in the 21st century, thousands of Christian denominations have sprung up with so many interpretations of Scripture. This phenomenon will make it more difficult for people seeking for the truth to find the needle of the right doctrine from the huge haystack of false ones. However, whatever the conditions might be, those who want to go to heaven have the responsibility to assess the right faith to believe. Just like a captain faring in the sea of life. He realizes that there are many false lighthouses constructed by Satan, but that does not mean that he can ignore his responsibility to get his ship safely to the haven. He must put forth a great effort and concentrate with all his worth to detect the right light broadcasted by the right lighthouse from the false ones. What will happen if he loses hope and steer his ship by the light of any lighthouse he sees per chance. Woe to him. Please note that I am not saying that a person can be saved by his effort or his intelligence in steering his ship of life. The gift of salvation is wholly from God, and men have no credit in it but to accept. However, Satan is playing God and offers

false salvation to anyone who is willing to believe his lies. Thus, the person who is saved is the one who believes in the true salvation from the true God.

There are many Christians, even preachers and pastors who are confused and without hope. They say that they are not willing to talk about doctrines. Isn't it strange? What is then taught in the church? Oldwives fables?

What truly differentiate one religion from the others? Doctrines! What differentiate one denomination with others? Doctrines! What differentiate one church from another? Doctrines! A pastor or preacher has to learn doctrines by comparing them against the others and assess them based on the Bible then decide which are the right ones. After that, it is his duty to broadcast them. The local church as the pillar and ground of the truth is the broadcaster of the true signal to its surroundings just like a lighthouse. The world is watching the signals broadcasted by the church. Imagine if a church refuses the responsibility assigned by God by ignoring the doctrines and thus acts according to its own wisdom. Since it is not interested in the doctrines but keeps sending a signal, thus the signal must be a wrong one. Please think it over.